

The Intelligencer.

Taxes on Steamboats.

Our attention has been called to a decision lately rendered in the United States Circuit Court at New Orleans relative to the right of a city to levy a tonnage wharfage tax on steamboats. It seems that the John Kille Steamboat and Towboat Company, and the North Western Union Packet Company of Keokuk, Iowa, seek to recover nearly \$10,000 which they had paid to the city of New Orleans in the shape of wharfage, and they were successful in their suit. The Court held that the ordinance of the city levying this wharfage tax upon the boats of the companies named, was contrary to that clause in the Constitution of the United States, which forbids a state to pass any law levying a tonnage tax on vessels. What gives the New Orleans decision additional interest is the fact that similar suits are pending in nearly every city along the Mississippi. We presume that all cities and towns along the Ohio river will feel an interest in the first disposition of these cases, especially as the New Orleans decision is made under a decision of the Supreme Court of the United States. We are not sure that the city of Wheeling can collect wharfage under her present ordinance. Steamboats landing at our wharf are required to pay wharfage according to their tonnage. For instance, boats of less than 100 tons are required to pay \$3 for the first 24 hours and \$1.50 for every subsequent 24 hours or any part thereof. Boats of 100 tons, and less than 200 tons, are required to pay \$5 for the first 24 hours and \$2.50 for every succeeding 24 hours or any part thereof.

As we understand this New Orleans decision such an ordinance is in conflict with Sec. 10 of the First Article of the Constitution of the United States, which enacts that "no State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage." Of course, what a State cannot do a city or town cannot do. It is therefore a question whether under the decision referred to the city will not be obliged to change her basis of collecting wharfage.

Freight Rates to Wheeling.

Under the new schedule that went into effect on Monday the rates on freight from Baltimore to Wheeling have been doubled on first class goods and nearly doubled on the other classes. The old schedule on first class freight was 18c per hundred; now it is 36c. On second class it was 15c, now 31c. Third class, 12c, now 24c. Fourth class, 11c, now 22c. Special rates 11c, now 22c. This is a heavy increase. As usual, it exceeds the tariff to more distant points. For instance, the Baltimore road will carry first class freight to Columbus, Ohio, at 34c—3c less than to Wheeling. She will carry it to Toledo for 35c, or 4c less than to Wheeling. She carries it to Cincinnati and Indianapolis for 40c.

The rates from Philadelphia to Wheeling are as follows: First class 36c, old 22c. Second class 32c, old 22c. Third class 27c, old 22c. Fourth class 23c, old 14c. Special 23c, old 14c.

Rates from New York: First class 45c, old 25c. Second class 40c, old 25c. Third class 35c, old 25c. Fourth class 30c, old 25c. Special 35c, old 25c.

The rates are the same by the Baltimore & Ohio and the Pennsylvania Central to Wheeling.

For the convenience of business men we tabulate these rates as follows:

From	To	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Spec.
New York	Wheeling	45	40	35	30	35
Philadelphia	Wheeling	36	32	27	23	23
Baltimore	Wheeling	36	32	27	23	23

The following are the rates from Wheeling to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York and Boston:

To	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Spec.
Baltimore	36	32	27	23	23
Philadelphia	36	32	27	23	23
New York	45	40	35	30	35
Boston	50	45	40	35	40

There was no change in the rates from Wheeling to the above points. The late cheap rates never applied to East bound freight from this point. In other words, the rates as above given are the same that have obtained for a long while past.

POLITICAL MEMORANDA.—A Democratic County Convention is called to meet at St. Clairsville on the 30th—Saturday next—an object of which is to send delegates to the Democratic State Convention at Columbus on the 5th of January.

The Mountaineer Republicans will fire its guns this afternoon from the top of Mount. Capt. Geo. Crumbacker's gun went down yesterday to do the honors of the occasion. It is a vigorous speaker for Hayes and Wheeler. The Hon. A. B. Caldwell, of this city, will address the people at the Court House some time in the afternoon.

Texas and West Virginia having at last furnished a statement of their vote for President, we have now the vote of all the States. Counting the vote in Colorado for Governor as that for President, the aggregates are as follows:

For Hayes and Wheeler	For Tilden and Hendricks	For Grant and Colfax	For Fremont and Allen	For Hancock and Sherman
1,012,443	1,020,221	69,851	6,753	5,238
Total	4,012,300			

Some of the States have not classified their scattering votes. Undoubtedly many of those stated above were given for freebacks or prohibition. The figures used in making up these aggregates are those officially returned. The vote falls short of that actually given, as in some States counties did not make re-

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Mr. Platt offered a resolution for the appointment of a Select Committee to investigate the charges made yesterday by Hewitt, in his letter to the Postoffice, in connection with the New York Postoffice. In connection with it, Platt sent to the clerk's desk and had read a telegram from Post-master James pronouncing the accusation utterly and absolutely false.

After discussion of the resolution, the House adjourned.

Mr. Hewitt narrated the circumstances under which he made the charge, he said about a month ago he received a letter, the writer stating that he was an employee of the New York Postoffice, and that he had found a considerable number of the envelopes presenting a pucker or corrugated appearance. He had called the attention of the gentleman in his office to the fact, but he had been told to pick out two classes of letters, those which had been apparently opened, and those that had not. When he came to Washington, he was struck with the fact that the letters received from Boston, Chicago, and other points had a perfect smooth surface on the flaps of the envelopes, while frequently the letters from New York presented that corrugated appearance. He had happened to show to Park Goodwin, a friend of the Postmaster, one of the envelopes, and asked him if it looked so. He then asked Mr. Goodwin to see Mr. James, in whose integrity he (Mr. Hewitt) had entire confidence and whose valuable services should be retained through all questions in politics, and to mention the matter to him. He (Hewitt) wished the House to understand that he did not think Mr. James would be or could be a party to any tampering with letters. He had shown two letters one morning to the gentleman from Maine (Hewitt), and had pointed out the corrugated appearance of the envelopes, and Mr. Hale had told him he ought to call the attention of the House to the matter if he thought his handwriting could not be identified. He was told that he was taking unnecessary precaution. It might be his eyes deceived him and it might be that investigation would be able to get at the facts, of which he had no knowledge. He had no objection, of course, to a committee of investigation, but he thought it probable that no good would come of it, and no important facts would be discovered. Hence he had not been willing to put the country to the expense of an investigation. But if it was the wish of the House or of the gentlemen on the other side to have one, he should cheerfully assent. Unfortunately he had thrown into the waste basket the anonymous letters, as he did with all the anonymous letters he received, amounting to ten or twenty a week. Therefore his handwriting could not be identified. So too with the envelopes; they had been thrown away. And it was a remarkable fact that none of the letters received by him to-day presented any appearance of having been tampered with.

Mr. Knott said he had favored the introduction of the resolution not merely because it concerned the administration of an officer of the highest reputation, but especially because the public confidence should not be destroyed without cause. In the Postoffice investigation, during his connection with that department at the opening of the late war, so sacred was the role of inviolability of the cor-

By Telegraph

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